

FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS

*The Soviet Union and
Japan in the Far East*

August 17, 1932
Vol. VIII, No. 12

25¢
a copy

Published Fortnightly
by the

\$5.00
a year

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED

EIGHTEEN EAST FORTY-FIRST STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y.

THE SOVIET UNION AND JAPAN IN THE FAR EAST

by

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with the aid of the Research Staff of the Foreign Policy Association

JAPAN'S occupation of North Manchuria, long recognized as Russia's sphere of influence,¹ and the consequent paralysis of the Chinese Eastern Railway,² jointly managed by Russia and China, threatens to renew Russo-Japanese rivalry in this region, with the Soviet Union replacing the Tsarist Empire as one of the protagonists. Tokyo fears that the Soviet government will eventually challenge its hold on Manchuria, which any great power would ordinarily regard as a hostile act, while Moscow believes that Japan, having consolidated its power on Manchurian territory, will attempt to occupy Eastern Siberia before the completion of the Five-Year Plan.

Tokyo's Manchurian campaign has caused Moscow all the more apprehension because memories of Japan's intervention in Siberia, 1918-1920, are still fresh in the Soviet

Union. The avowed purpose of this intervention, in which the United States and several of the Allies participated, was to protect Czechoslovak prisoners, then on their famous march to the Pacific, against alleged attacks by Austrian and German prisoners, and to strengthen the eastern front, disrupted by Russia's withdrawal from the World War. Japan, however, apparently regarded a struggle with Bolshevism as the main purpose of intervention.³ Instead of the 7,000 men whom it had agreed to send to Siberia, Japan dispatched over 70,000, ostensibly to protect Siberian railways. Despite American protests, the Japanese aided various anti-Bolshevik movements, notably those headed by Kalmikov and Semenov.

When the American troops left Siberia on April 1, 1920, Japan announced that it could not effect an immediate evacuation, but de-

1. By the secret convention of July 30, 1907, reaffirmed on July 4, 1910, Russia and Japan drew a line delimiting North and South Manchuria as their respective spheres of influence, and Russia recognized Japan's special interests in Korea, while Japan recognized Russia's special interests in Outer Mongolia. For the English texts of these conventions, which were published by the Soviet government after the 1917 revolution, cf. Victor A. Yakhontoff, *Russia and the Soviet Union in the Far East* (New York, Coward-McCann, 1931), p. 375 and 377. For the present status of Outer Mongolia, cf. p. 138.

2. Owing to limitations of space, it will be impossible to do more than briefly review the history of the Chinese Eastern Railway in this report. It will be recalled that in 1891 the Tsarist government undertook the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, which was to link Russia with the Pacific. The Far Eastern section of this railway, built on Russian territory, followed a circuitous course along the Amur River, and it appeared desirable, both for economic and strategic reasons, to build a second section, affording a direct route to Vladivostok through Manchuria, a region controlled by China. By the secret Li-Lobanov treaty of 1896, China granted permission for the construction of a railway through North Manchuria, which was to be built and operated by a private corporation. (John V. A. MacMurray, *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China*, New York, Oxford University Press, two volumes, Vol. I, p. 81.) The construction of this railway was financed by the Russo-Chinese bank, established in 1895 with the assistance of several prominent Paris banks. On September 8, 1896, the Chinese Minister in St. Petersburg and representatives of the Russo-Chinese bank signed a contract by which China granted the bank a concession for the construction and operation of a railway establishing direct communication between Chita and the Russian Ussuri Railway, the easternmost section of the Trans-Siberian system. (*Ibid.*, p. 74.) This railway was to be constructed by a separate corporation—the "Chinese Eastern Company"—which was founded in December 1896 as a Russian joint-stock company. (*Ibid.*, p. 84.) It was provided that, at the expiration of 80 years from the date of completion, the railway was to revert to China free of charge, while at the expiration of 36 years China was to have the right to buy it upon payment in full of capital, debts and interest. Construction of the Chinese Eastern was begun in 1897, and the line was opened to traffic on July 1, 1903. The western terminus of the main line is at Manchouli, where it connects with the Trans-Siberian, and its eastern terminus at Pogranichnaya, where it connects with the Russian Ussuri Railway. The total cost of the railway is estimated at \$200,000,000. In 1910 the Russo-Chinese bank was

merged with the Banque du Nord, a Paris institution, and became known as the Russo-Asiatic bank. It has been estimated that in 1912 over 60 per cent of the shares of the Russo-Asiatic bank were held by French investors. S. Ronin, *Inostrannyi Kapital i Russkie Banki* (Foreign Capital and Russian Banks), Moscow, 1926.

During the period of Allied intervention in Siberia, the Chinese Eastern was placed under the supervision of an Inter-Allied Committee, which terminated its administration of the railway on October 31, 1922, when the last of the Japanese troops evacuated Siberia. China had meanwhile concluded an agreement on October 2, 1920 with the Russo-Asiatic bank, which had been reorganized in Paris following the Bolshevik revolution, and claimed to be the sole shareholder of the Chinese Eastern. By this agreement China temporarily took over the supervision of the railway normally exercised by Russia, on the ground that no recognized Russian government existed at that time. On May 31, 1924 the Soviet Union and China concluded two agreements—the Agreement on General Principles and the Agreement for the Provisional Management of the Chinese Eastern. (*Treaties and Agreements with and Concerning China, 1919-1929*, Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1929, p. 133 and 141.) The first of these agreements declared that the Chinese Eastern was a "purely commercial enterprise," and that its fate was to be determined by the two governments at a subsequent conference, "to the exclusion of any third party or parties." Pending revision, the 1896 railway contract and the charter of the Chinese Eastern company were to remain in force. It was recognized that China had jurisdiction and police control over the territory owned by the railway, as well as the right to redeem the line "with Chinese capital." The second agreement provided for a board of directors composed of ten members, five of whom were to be appointed by China and five by the Soviet Union. The railway was to have a Chinese president and a Russian vice-president and manager. The Russo-Asiatic bank protested against the Peking agreements on behalf of the bond and shareholders of the railway. On September 20, 1924 the Soviet government concluded an agreement in Mukden with Marshal Chang Tso-lin, then governor of Manchuria. (*Ibid.*, p. 148.) The Mukden agreement summarized the provisions of the two Peking agreements regarding the Chinese Eastern. In addition, it provided that the concession period of 80 years specified in the 1896 railway contract was to be reduced to 60, at the expiration of which the line with all its appurtenances was to pass free of charge to China. For a more detailed account of the Chinese Eastern, cf. "Russia and China in Manchuria," F. P. A. *Information Service*, Vol. V, No. 11, August 7, 1929.

FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS, VOL. VIII, No. 12, AUGUST 17, 1932

Published bi-weekly by the FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, Incorporated, 18 East 41st Street, New York, N. Y., U. S. A. JAMES G. McDONALD, *Chairman*; RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL, *Research Director and Editor*; WILLIAM T. STONE, *Washington Representative*; HELEN TERRY, *Assistant Editor*; ELIZABETH BATTERHAM, *Secretary of the Research Department*. *Research Associates*: T. A. BISSON, VERA MICHELES DEAN, MAHEL S. INGALLS, HELEN H. MOORHEAD, ONA K. D. RINGWOOD, MAXWELL S. STEWART, M. S. WERTHEIMER, JOHN C. DEWILDE, WILBUR L. WILLIAMS. Subscription Rates: \$5.00 a year; to F. P. A. members \$3.00; single copies 25 cents. Entered as second-class matter on March 31, 1931 at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

nied that it had any designs on Russian territory. The population of Siberia grew increasingly hostile to Japanese occupation, and clashes between Russian nationals and Japanese troops became a daily occurrence. The most dramatic of these took place at Nikolaevsk, where Russians describing themselves as "partisans" massacred Japanese troops and civilians in February 1920. The Japanese seized on this incident to justify the extension of their control, and occupied the northern portion of Sakhalin.

The position of the Japanese troops, however, was rendered increasingly difficult after 1920 by the formation in Siberia of the Far Eastern Republic, which was recognized by the Bolshevik government. The growing strength of Bolshevism, as well as the protests of the United States and of certain elements in Japan against the continuance of intervention, finally caused Tokyo to enter into negotiations with the Far Eastern Republic. The first conference, held at Dairen from August 1921 to April 1922, resulted in failure. Meanwhile, at the Washington Conference, Japan had assured the United States that it was its "fixed and settled policy" to observe the principle of non-intervention in Russia's internal affairs. At a conference which opened at Changchun on September 3, 1922 Japan once more attempted to reach an agreement with the Far Eastern Republic, which was openly supported by Moscow. Despite the breakdown of this conference, Japan evacuated the mainland by November 1922, retaining only the northern part of Sakhalin.⁴

Unofficial negotiations for the establishment of Soviet-Japanese relations were opened in 1922, when M. Joffe, representing the Soviet government, conferred with Viscount Goto in Tokyo. These negotiations broke down, chiefly because Japan insisted on Soviet recognition of Tsarist debts and treaties, and demanded an official apology for the Nikolaevsk affair, which the Soviet government refused to give. Two years later, however, when Japan had been virtually isolated by Great Britain's abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902 and by the American Quota Immigration Act of 1924, negotiations were resumed by M. Karakhan, Soviet Ambassador to China. On January 20, 1925 the two countries concluded a convention establishing diplomatic and consular relations.⁵ This convention provided that the Portsmouth treaty of 1905, which brought the Russo-Japanese war to a

close, remained in force, while other Russo-Japanese treaties concluded before 1917 were to be re-examined at a subsequent conference. The two parties undertook "to refrain and restrain all persons in any governmental service for them, and all organizations in receipt of any financial assistance from them, from any act . . . liable in any way whatever to endanger" order and security in their respective territories, and agreed not to permit the presence of "organizations or groups pretending to be the government for any part of the territory of the other party." While the first of these provisions represented a Soviet pledge not to support Communist propaganda in Japan, the second barred Japanese aid to White Russians.

By a protocol attached to the convention, the question of Tsarist debts to Japan was deferred to future settlement, and Japan agreed that its troops should be withdrawn from northern Sakhalin by May 15, 1925, when the area was to be restored to the Soviet government. A second protocol provided that Japanese concerns recommended by the Tokyo government should have the right to exploit 50 per cent of each of certain specified oil fields in northern Sakhalin, and to prospect for oil in certain eastern areas of the island. In addition, the Japanese were permitted to exploit coal fields on the western coast of Sakhalin.⁶ Finally, on January 25, 1928, the two countries concluded a fishery convention for a term of eight years, by which the Soviet Union granted Japanese subjects the right to catch and prepare fish and aquatic products along the Soviet coasts of the Japan, Okhotsk and Behring seas, with the exception of 37 specified rivers and inlets.^{6a}

While the 1925 convention and the fishery agreement of 1928 established normal Soviet-Japanese relations, they failed to settle a number of questions which have since caused considerable friction between the two countries. The most important of these were the controversy over fishery rights; the status of Outer Mongolia; Japan's fear that the Soviet government, spurred by the success of the Five-Year Plan, would actively support communism in the Far East, and equal apprehension in Moscow that Japan, with the aid of White Russians who took refuge in Manchuria after the revolution, would attack the Soviet Union before the completion of its plans for industrialization.

The application of the fishery agreement has occasioned a number of disputes between Soviet authorities and Japanese fishing con-

3. K. K. Kawakami, *Japan's Pacific Policy* (New York, Dutton, 1922), p. 250; General William S. Graves, *America's Siberian Adventure* (New York, Cape and Smith, 1931).

4. Following Japanese evacuation, the Far Eastern Republic became a part of the R. S. F. S. R. under the name of "Far Eastern Area"; in 1926 it was reorganized into the Far Eastern Region of the U. S. S. R.

5. *League of Nations Treaty Series*, Vol. XXXIV (1925), p. 32.

6. For details regarding the Japanese oil and coal concessions in Sakhalin, contracts for which were signed in 1925, cf. Vera M. Dean, "Foreign Trade Policy of the Soviet Government," *F. P. A. Information Service*, Vol. VI, No. 20, December 10, 1930, p. 375.

6a. *League of Nations Treaty Series*, No. LXXX (1928), p. 341.

cerns. The Japanese fishing industry, which had never been soundly established, has suffered in recent years both from shortage of capital and from the drastic fall in canned fish prices, and has consequently found it difficult to compete with Soviet fisheries.⁷ Scarcely a fishing season has gone by, moreover, without mutual recrimination on the part of Soviet and Japanese fishermen, each side accusing the other of poaching on its lots. The principal dispute, however, has arisen over payments for the annual leases which, according to the agreement, were to be made in rubles. The Japanese had been accustomed to pay for their leases through the Vladivostok branch of the Bank of Chosen, a semi-official Japanese institution. In December 1930 the Soviet authorities suddenly closed this bank on the ground that it had speculated in ruble exchange, and demanded that lease payments be made in rubles at the gold parity value of 51.45 cents. The Japanese protested, and the question formed the subject of protracted diplomatic negotiations in the spring of 1931. Although a compromise was finally reached which assigned to the ruble a valuation of 32.5 sen (16 cents)—a figure below the official Soviet quotation—it failed to restore harmony. The Soviet authorities declared that the new valuation applied only to fishery leases, and demanded that certain taxes and fines which were due in rubles be paid at the official quotation. The Japanese refused to do this, and negotiations had apparently reached a deadlock by the end of 1931.⁸

The status of Outer Mongolia has played an important part in Russo-Japanese relations since 1905. The division of Mongolia, which had been under China's suzerainty since the seventeenth century, into outer and inner areas, had long been conceded by other powers, and it will be recalled that by the secret convention of 1907, reaffirmed in 1910, Japan had recognized Russia's special interests in Outer Mongolia.⁹ Russia had acquired these interests as early as 1881 under a treaty concluded with China at St. Petersburg.¹⁰ In 1911, when China was torn by revolution, the Mongolian princes and lamas revolted against the Peking government, declared the independence of Outer Mongolia, proclaimed the Hutukhtu, head of the religious order of lamas, as Mongolian ruler, and sent a mission to St. Petersburg requesting Russian protection against China. By the agreement of November 3, 1912, Russia undertook to assist Mongolia in maintaining its autonomy; it also recognized that

the Mongolian government had the right to form its own army and not to admit Chinese colonization or the presence of Chinese troops on its territory. In return, Mongolia granted a number of privileges to Russian nationals and Russian trade.¹¹

Mongolia's position was further defined by a Russo-Chinese declaration and exchange of notes on November 5, 1913. Russia recognized China's suzerainty over Outer Mongolia, while China recognized the autonomy of its former vassal. Both parties agreed that the Mongols had the exclusive right to settle all administrative and commercial questions in their territory, and undertook to send no troops into Outer Mongolia, to maintain no civil or military officials in that region, and to abstain from colonization. China accepted Russia's good offices for the establishment of relations with Outer Mongolia, and it was agreed that all questions of a political or territorial nature affecting the interests of Russia and China in that region were to be settled by subsequent negotiations, in which Outer Mongolia was to participate.¹²

Shortly after the outbreak of the World War in September 1914, Russia consolidated its position in Outer Mongolia by two agreements concluded with the Mongolian government at Kiakhta. By the first of these instruments, Mongolia agreed to seek Russia's advice regarding the construction of future railways and to consult Russia before granting railway concessions to foreign nationals,¹³ while by the second Russia obtained a concession for a telegraph line which Mongolia could purchase at the expiration of thirty years.¹⁴ These agreements were followed on June 7, 1915 by a tripartite treaty which Russia, China and Mongolia signed at Kiakhta.¹⁵ Russia and China reaffirmed their recognition of Mongolia's autonomy and reiterated their intention not to interfere in its internal administration, while Mongolia recognized China's suzerainty. According to the terms of this treaty, Mongolia had the right to conclude international agreements regarding all questions of a commercial and industrial nature, but not regarding political and territorial questions. The tripartite treaty practically established Russo-Chinese co-suzerainty over Outer Mongolia.¹⁶

The Bolshevik revolution offered China an opportunity to regain its influence in Outer Mongolia. The Chinese General Hsü Shutseng dispatched troops to that region in violation of previous agreements with Russia, displaced the government of the Hutukhtu,

7. American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, *Memorandum on Soviet-Japanese Fisheries*, April 6, 1932.

8. Cf. *Memorandum on Soviet-Japanese Fisheries*, cited.

9. Cf. footnote 2.

10. The treaty of St. Petersburg, concluded for a ten-year period subject to renewal, was renewed in 1891 and 1901, but was neither renewed nor abrogated in 1911.

11. MacMurray, *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China*, cited, Vol. II, p. 992.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 1066.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 1178.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 1179.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 1239.

16. H. B. Morse and H. F. McNair, *Far Eastern International Relations* (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1931), p. 567.

and attempted to oust Russia from its favored position. The situation in Outer Mongolia was further complicated by the appearance of Baron Ungern von Sternberg, a White Russian officer who had served under Semenov and had been driven from Siberia by the Bolsheviks. In the autumn of 1920 Baron Ungern, with a motley band of followers, attacked Urga, the capital of Outer Mongolia, which he occupied in 1921. The Hutukhtu was restored to power, and Baron Ungern became his chief military adviser. The Revolutionary Mongol People's party, formed in Russia in 1918, had meanwhile proclaimed a Provisional Government at Kiakhta, on Soviet territory. When Baron Ungern attempted to attack Kiakhta, he was defeated by Soviet troops, which then pressed on to Urga, capturing it in July 1921. The Hutukhtu was shorn of his temporal power, and a Revolutionary Mongol People's Government closely associated with Moscow was established at Urga.¹⁷ Having repudiated all Tsarist treaties with Mongolia, the Soviet government, by an agreement of November 5, 1921, recognized the Mongolian People's Government, with which it established diplomatic and commercial relations.¹⁸ That Outer Mongolia might serve as a buffer against future attempts to invade Russia was indicated in Article 3 of the agreement, by which each party undertook not to permit the formation or sojourn in its territory of any organizations, groups or individuals hostile to the other, and to prevent the transportation or importation of arms belonging or consigned to organizations "struggling directly or indirectly" against the other party. The Soviet government, however, did not disregard China's interests: by the Peking agreement of May 31, 1924, it recognized Outer Mongolia as an "integral part" of China, and agreed to withdraw its troops from that region, which it did in 1925.

The evacuation of Soviet troops caused no decline in Soviet influence. The Mongolian political and economic system is modeled as closely on that of the Soviet Union as the social conditions of a predominantly nomadic population permit.¹⁹ The government is controlled by the Mongolian Communist party, a section of the Third International. The Mongolian army, estimated at 60,000, is almost entirely officered by Russians, and employs several hundred Russian advisers. The state bank—*Mongolbank*, founded in 1924—is connected with the Soviet State

Bank, which owns 50 per cent of its capital, and is managed principally by Soviet personnel. The Mongolian cooperative trade organization—*Moncencop*—is patterned after similar Soviet institutions, and over half of its employees are Russians. Finally, the Mongolian government employs Russian specialists for the supervision of mining and forest developments.²⁰

While the Russo-Japanese conventions of 1907 and 1910, by which Japan recognized Russia's special interests in Outer Mongolia, have been repudiated by the Soviet government, Japan has hitherto made no attempt to interfere with Soviet domination in Outer Mongolia. Fear has been expressed in Tokyo, however, that the Mongolian Republic might eventually become a member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and that the Soviet government might then seek to extend its influence to Inner Mongolia, which Japan regards as its sphere of interest. Tokyo, moreover, claims that the Soviet Union has established the principle of the "closed door" in Outer Mongolia and that "the only side on which Mongolian bread is buttered is the Russian."²¹ It has been suggested that Japan terminate this state of affairs by recognizing the Mongolian Republic and establishing official relations with it.²²

The apprehension with which Tokyo has watched the growth of Soviet influence in Outer Mongolia has been sharpened by its belief that the Soviet government, contrary to the terms of the 1925 convention, has tolerated, if not actually supported, the activities of the Third International in Japan, as well as in China and Korea. Information regarding the Communist movement in Japan, however, is almost wholly lacking, as the Japanese Communist party has been banned, and its principal leaders have been imprisoned.²³ The Soviet government, for its part, has accused Japan of supporting White Russians, with a view to eventual invasion of Siberia. The presence of more than 100,000 White Russians in North Manchuria, many of whom are former Tsarist officers who would welcome the overthrow of Soviet power, even if effected by the Japanese, has been a constant source of irritation to the Soviet government.

Despite occasional friction, Soviet-Japanese relations were marked by comparative stability during the period 1925-1931, and were not strained even by the clash which occurred in 1929 between the Soviet Union and China concerning the Chinese Eastern Railway. It will be recalled that on July 10,

17. *Ibid.*, p. 665-669; Louis Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (New York, Cape and Smith, 1930, two volumes), Vol. II, p. 531, *et seq.*

18. *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China, 1919-1929*, cited, p. 53.

19. For the constitution of the Mongolian Republic, adopted by the Mongol Peoples' Assembly in November 1924, cf. *The China Year Book, 1928* (Tientsin, The Tientsin Press, 1929), p. 381.

20. *The China Year Book, 1931* (Shanghai, North China Daily News and Herald, 1932), p. 29 *et seq.*; Hallett Abend, *New York Times*, May 22, 1932.

21. Tokichi Tanaka, "Soviet-Japanese Relations," *Contemporary Japan*, June 1932, p. 16.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Cf. T. A. Bisson, "Democracy in Japan," *F. P. A. Information Service*, Vol. VI, No. 8, June 25, 1930, p. 161 and 166.

1929, following a raid on the Soviet Consulate-General in Harbin, the Manchurian authorities arrested over one hundred Soviet employees of the Chinese Eastern, including the Soviet manager, seized control of the railway, and ordered the closing of all Soviet organizations in Manchuria. These drastic measures, it was claimed, had been made necessary by the Soviet government's non-observance of the propaganda clauses of the Peking and Mukden agreements of 1924, allegedly revealed by documents found during the raid on the Harbin consulate. The Soviet Union expressed willingness to enter into negotiations regarding the Chinese Eastern, but demanded the release of all arrested Soviet citizens and the cancellation of all orders for the seizure of the railway. When China refused to comply with these demands, the Soviet government, which had already severed diplomatic relations with China in 1927 following a raid on the Soviet embassy in Peking, recalled its consular and commercial representatives. Claiming that Chinese troops, assisted by White Russians, had made incursions into Soviet territory, the Soviet Union undertook a series of reprisals, and in November 1929 Soviet forces captured the border towns of Manchouli, Dalainor and Hailar, shortly withdrawing to the border. The Mukden government of Chang Hsueh-liang capitulated on November 26, and negotiations for settlement of the dispute were opened at Habarovsk.²⁴

On December 2, however, Secretary Stimson addressed identical notes to the Soviet Union and China, reminding them of their obligations under the Kellogg pact, and stating that their standing in "the good opinion of the world" would in great measure depend on the way in which they carried out "these most sacred principles."²⁵ The American note aroused the ire of the Soviet government, which declared on December 3 that it had brought "unjustifiable" pressure to bear on the Habarovsk negotiations, and could not be considered as "a friendly act."²⁶ Japan declined to support the action of the United States, principally on the ground that it might thus be drawn into a discussion with the Soviet Union and China "on the merits and demerits of the issue raised," and might eventually be constrained to take further action with respect to one or both of the parties in dispute.²⁷ By an agreement signed at Habarovsk on December 22, 1929, the Soviet Union and China undertook to settle

all outstanding questions which had arisen during the period of joint management of the railway at a subsequent conference. Meanwhile, China was to disarm White Russians in Manchuria, Soviet railway employees were to be reinstated, and the Chinese president of the line was henceforth to act jointly with the Soviet vice-president; the Soviet government, for its part, was to release all Chinese subjects arrested on Soviet territory, and consular relations were to be resumed between the two countries.²⁸ After considerable delay, the Sino-Soviet conference met at Moscow in October 1930. Negotiations, however, have as yet made little progress.²⁹

The concern shown by the Soviet Union in 1929 indicated that it could not remain indifferent to events in Manchuria, especially when these affected the Chinese Eastern, which gives direct access to Vladivostok³⁰ and constitutes the principal artery for Soviet trade in the Far East. It was consequently not surprising that the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, which began on September 18, 1931, should have caused anxiety in Moscow. This occupation was regarded by Soviet writers less as an attempt to secure markets and raw materials, than as an effort to check class conflicts in Japan by an onslaught on the Soviet Union. According to Soviet views, the United States and the League of Nations tolerated, if they did not actually support, Japanese action in Manchuria, in the hope that Tokyo would serve as vanguard in the struggle of imperialism against communism. In analyzing the attitude of the great powers with regard to the Manchurian question, Soviet publicists contended that Great Britain was ready to aid Japan in the division of China, partly to square accounts with American imperialism, and partly to overthrow the Soviet government; that France and Japan had concluded an alliance directed against the international revolutionary movement, especially in the Orient; and that France's allies—Poland and Rumania—would seize this opportunity to attack the U. S. S. R. The United States, they held, alone of the imperialist powers, opposed Japan, but was reluctant to take vigorous action, both because of its hostility to the Soviet Union and because it hoped to reap profits from China's spoliation. It was believed, however, that while the goal of Japan's drive in Manchuria was the seizure of Eastern Siberia, its ultimate objective was war with the United States. Finally, it was asserted that the

24. For a detailed account of the Chinese Eastern conflict, cf. Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs*, cited, Vol. II, p. 795 et seq.; *The China Year Book*, 1931, cited, p. 495.

25. Department of State, *Press Releases*, December 2, 1929.

26. J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1929 (London, Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 278.

27. Address to the Diet by Baron Shidehara, Japanese Foreign Minister, on January 30, 1930, *The Trans-Pacific*, January 30, 1930, p. 11-12. Cf. T. A. Bisson, "The Re-Orientation of Japan's Foreign Policy," *F. P. A. Information Service*, Vol. VI, No. 16, October 15, 1930, p. 293.

28. Wheeler-Bennett, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1929, cited, p. 281.

29. It has been reported that, in the course of these negotiations, China has attempted to purchase the Chinese Eastern Railway. *The China Weekly Review*, June 18, 1932, p. 83.

30. Cf. Karl Radek, "The War in the Far East," *Foreign Affairs* (New York), July 1932, p. 541, 557.

Soviet Union, eager as it is to concentrate on industrial construction in an atmosphere of peace, would not hesitate to defend its "vital rights" and territory against foreign attack.³¹

The growth of Soviet concern regarding events in Manchuria corresponded closely to the extension of Japanese occupation, reaching its peak in the spring of 1932 when the Japanese troops, having entered Harbin, proceeded to move along the Chinese Eastern to the Soviet border. The occupation of all important South Manchurian centers in September³² was received with considerable restraint by the Soviet press. *Pravda*, organ of the Communist party, declared on September 21 that the action of Japan, intended to strengthen the "economic and political hegemony" of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria, "had been in preparation for a long period." The burden of Soviet criticism was directed less against Japan than against existing peace machinery. The Manchurian events, said *Pravda*, had furnished new evidence that the Kellogg pact was futile as a "guaranty against war" and that the League of Nations was merely an "instrument of oppression and aggression in the hands of the imperialists."³³

A firmer note was struck on September 23, when the Soviet Consul-General at Harbin protested against the occupation by Japanese troops of the railway station at Changchun, which marks the junction of the Japanese-owned South Manchuria Railway with the Chinese Eastern.³⁴ On the same day, M. Karakhan, Acting Commissar of Foreign Affairs, informed the Chinese *chargé d'affaires* in Moscow that the Soviet government could no longer view the Manchurian conflict as a disinterested spectator,³⁵ while the organ of the Supreme Economic Council declared that "the laboring masses of the U.S.S.R. will follow the development of events with strained attention."³⁶

The Japanese authorities in Manchuria, apparently anxious not to antagonize the Soviet government, assured Soviet officials of the Chinese Eastern on September 25 that they would not interfere with the operation of the railway. Increasing nervousness, however, was revealed by a *Pravda* editorial of the same date, which denounced both Japanese imperialists and Chinese militarists as

"brigands and exploiters of the toiling masses," and attacked the League Council's resolution of September 22 which recommended the evacuation of Manchuria by Japan and China, provided the lives and property of their nationals were not thereby endangered." This qualification, said *Pravda*, established the thesis that "seizure, burglary, violence and intervention have developed into a principle," and revealed the League "as an instrument and organizer of war, pillage and bloody oppression of weak and subjected peoples."³⁷

A stronger tone was adopted by *Izvestia*, organ of the Soviet government, on September 26, when it bluntly declared that the Japanese occupation of South Manchuria could be described only as "war in the literal sense of the word." The League of Nations, said *Izvestia*, "attempts with the greatest cynicism to cover the acts of Japanese imperialism . . . concealing itself behind hypocritical resolutions and empty arguments," while its "most humble" bid for American cooperation on September 23 only proved that "the Geneva institution regards itself as an instrument for fulfilling the will of the great imperialist powers." In conclusion, *Izvestia* solemnly declared that Soviet public opinion, "which has always defended peace, has opposed all acts of imperialist oppression over weak countries and all military intervention, and has constantly struggled against the danger of war," could not remain indifferent to events in Manchuria.³⁸

While the Soviet government, by mid-October, had apparently accepted Japanese occupation of South Manchuria as a *fait accompli*, it feared that this occupation would have far-reaching international consequences and might rally the forces of capitalism and imperialism against the Soviet Union. Secretary Stimson's note to the League of October 5, in which he stated that his government, while acting independently, would "endeavor to re-enforce what the League does," was greeted by the Soviet press with far less virulence than previous American declarations on Manchuria. Soviet officials believed, however, that the United States had invoked the Kellogg pact indirectly, in its note to the League, solely to avoid communicating with the Soviet government, and regret was expressed that the United States should deliberately ignore the Soviet Union when both desired a peaceful settlement of the Manchurian crisis, and could obtain it by joint action.⁴⁰

31. Cf. Radek, "The War in the Far East," cited; G. Voltinskii, E. Iolk and N. Nasonov, "Dainii Vostok i Opasnost Voiny" (The Far East and Danger of War), *Boishevik*, March 31, 1932, p. 42; I. Volk, "Iaponia na Arene Voiny i Revolutzii" (Japan on the Scene of War and Revolution), *Ibid.*, April 5, 1932, p. 61.

32. Cf. T. A. Blisson, "Japan and Manchoukuo," *Foreign Policy Reports*, Vol. VIII, No. 8, June 22, 1932.

33. *Pravda*, September 21, 1931; *New York Herald Tribune*, September 22, 1931.

34. *New York Herald Tribune*, September 23, 1931.

35. *Ibid.*

36. N. Tuliakov, "Programma Iaponskovo Imperialisma v Manchurii" (Program of Japanese Imperialism in Manchuria), *Za Industrializatsiu* (For Industrialization), September 23, 1931.

37. Cf. John C. de Wilde, "The League and the Sino-Japanese Dispute," *Foreign Policy Reports*, Vol. VIII, No. 10, July 20, 1932.

38. *Pravda*, September 25, 1931; *New York Times*, September 26, 1931.

39. "Interventzia v Manchurii i Manevry Imperialistov" (Intervention in Manchuria and Manoeuvres of the Imperialists), *Izvestia*, September 26, 1931.

40. Walter Duranty, *New York Times*, October 14, 1931.

Developments in Manchuria had meanwhile begun to justify Soviet apprehensions. On October 27 the South Manchuria Railway authorities reported that the Soviet government had rendered assistance to General Ma Chan-shan, who had successfully crushed an independence movement launched in Heilungkiang province by General Chang Hai-peng; the latter, according to other sources, had received aid from the Japanese. Chinese dispatches of the same date indicated that between 20,000 and 30,000 Soviet troops had been concentrated on the Manchurian border.⁴¹ These reports were officially denied in Moscow on October 28.⁴² Nevertheless, in an interview with M. Karakhan on October 29, the Japanese Ambassador, Koki Hirota, expressed Japan's concern regarding Soviet activities in Manchuria, and declared that, should the Soviet Union send troops to the Chinese Eastern, "the Japanese government will be compelled to take the necessary measures of defense for the protection of its citizens and the defense of the Taonan-Tsitsihar Railway constructed with Japanese capital." M. Karakhan denied that the Soviet government had given assistance to General Ma or any other group in Manchuria, and reiterated the determination of the U. S. S. R. to maintain neutrality and observe existing treaties, adding that his government considered "the policy of military occupation . . . incompatible with the peaceful policy of the Soviet Union and the interests of general peace."⁴³ On November 4 *Izvestia* declared that the Japanese were using "the fable of Soviet interference and the slander about the concentration of Soviet troops" to justify the extension of their occupation.⁴⁴

This belief was strengthened by increasingly frequent reports of White Russian activities in Manchuria,⁴⁵ and of negotiations between the notorious Ataman Semenov and the Japanese authorities. Soviet allegations, however, were countered by Japanese reports that fifteen carloads of Soviet ammunition and 2,000 Chinese and Korean Communists, organized as an "international army," had arrived in the Nonni River district, where the Japanese were engaged in a struggle with the troops of General Ma.⁴⁶

On November 14, following an announcement by the Japanese that they might make a drive on Tsitsihar, M. Litvinov, Commissar of Foreign Affairs, called M. Hirota's attention to previous Japanese assurances

that Soviet interests in Manchuria would be protected. He expressed regret that, despite the Soviet denial of October 29 that military aid was being extended to China, the Japanese continued to spread "all sorts of rumors, which are quite unfounded, false, shameless and provocative." Finally, M. Litvinov declared that any attempt by the Japanese to close the Chinese Eastern in order to advance against Tsitsihar would "paralyze" the operation of the railway and cause material damage to Soviet interests.⁴⁷

In a reply dispatched on November 18 Japan pointed out that it had maintained an attitude of strict neutrality during the Sino-Soviet clash of 1929, and expected the Soviet Union to adopt a similar policy in the case of Manchuria. The Soviet government was assured that, should the Japanese be compelled to advance on the Chinese Eastern, they would take every precaution not to interfere with the operation of the railway, "provided that the Chinese do not utilize it for military purposes." Tokyo, however, would hold the Chinese Eastern "partly responsible for hostilities in Manchuria," because it had transported the troops of General Ma.⁴⁸ On November 18 the Japanese forces, having defeated General Ma, occupied Tsitsihar. General Honjo, commanding the Japanese army in Manchuria, declared that he was satisfied that General Ma had received arms, ammunition and some trained men from the Soviet Union, but that "the Soviets took no positive action in this engagement."⁴⁹

The occupation of Tsitsihar aroused grave concern in Moscow. Replying to the Japanese note of November 18, M. Litvinov declared on November 20 that the extension of Japanese operations beyond "the original zone" could not fail "to cause the Soviet government serious anxiety." The analogy drawn by Japan between the Sino-Soviet dispute of 1929 and events in Manchuria was, in his opinion, unfounded. The Soviet officials of the Chinese Eastern, said M. Litvinov, had received instructions not to permit the transportation of troops, and had maintained strict neutrality; under the circumstances, he argued, Tokyo was wrong in assuming that the railway could be held "partly responsible" for future developments in Manchuria.⁵⁰ On November 22 *Izvestia* warned Japan that "the dark forces of imperialist cliques" wanted to create a Soviet-Japanese conflict, and that Tokyo should beware of straining its relations with the U. S. S. R.—"the only country which prac-

41. Hallett Abend, *New York Times*, October 28, 1931.

42. *New York Herald Tribune*, October 28, 1931.

43. *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, and *Christian Science Monitor*, October 30, 1931.

44. *Izvestia*, November 4, 1931; *New York Times*, November 5, 1931.

45. *New York Times*, and *New York Herald Tribune*, November 10, 1931.

46. *New York Times*, November 11, 1931.

47. Walter Duranty, *New York Times*, November 15, 1931.

48. *New York Times*, and *New York Herald Tribune*, November 19, 1931; *Izvestia*, November 21, 1931.

49. *New York Herald Tribune*, November 19, 1931.

50. *New York Times*, and *New York Herald Tribune*, November 21, 1931; *Izvestia*, November 21, 1931.

tices a policy of peace and pursues no selfish aims in the Far East."⁵¹

The Soviet government's desire to avoid a conflict with Japan was indicated by the fact that on December 31 M. Litvinov, in conversation with Kenkichi Yoshizawa, newly appointed Japanese Foreign Minister who stopped in Moscow on his way to Tokyo, suggested that the two countries should conclude a non-aggression pact.⁵² This proposal was not examined by the Japanese cabinet until M. Yoshizawa's arrival in Tokyo on January 14. The occupation of Chinchow by Japanese troops on January 2 had meanwhile increased Moscow's anxiety, and on January 12 Alexander Troianovski, Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo, informed Premier Ki Inukai that a non-aggression pact would serve to allay apprehension regarding Soviet-Japanese rivalry in North Manchuria.⁵³ The Japanese government, however, took the view that, since both the Soviet Union and Japan had subscribed to the Kellogg pact, an additional non-aggression agreement was not only superfluous, but might provoke the suspicions of other states.⁵⁴ Moreover, the Japanese military staff held that a non-aggression pact would serve no useful purpose unless the Soviet government was prepared to negotiate a broad agreement covering Communist propaganda and Soviet dumping.⁵⁵

Japan's reluctance to consider a non-aggression pact produced an unfavorable impression in Moscow. The Soviet government categorically denied reports appearing in the Japanese press that it had proposed a general entente to Japan,⁵⁶ and *Izvestia* declared that Tokyo's rejection of the Soviet proposal could only further convince the masses that Japan intended to proceed with the occupation of Manchuria unhampered by international agreements.⁵⁷ *Izvestia* dismissed as ridiculous the Japanese argument that relations between the two countries were so friendly as to make further guarantees of peace unnecessary, and stated that the Kellogg pact, in which Tokyo placed so much faith, was a clumsy mechanism which had not prevented Japan from attacking China.

Tension in North Manchuria was further increased on January 28 when the Japanese, having failed to obtain the permission of M. Kuznetsov, Soviet vice-president of the Chi-

nese Eastern, for the transportation of troops from Changchun to Harbin, where looting of Japanese property had been reported, manned three armored trains and dispatched them to the threatened area.⁵⁸ In an interview with M. Karakhan on January 29, M. Hirota requested Soviet permission for the transportation of troops over the Chinese Eastern to Harbin, and declared that his government was willing to pay passenger rates. The Soviet government agreed to permit the transportation of Japanese troops provided the Chinese authorities of the railway offered no objection and provided the Japanese undertook not to damage Soviet interests in the railway.⁵⁹

While the Hirota-Karakhan interview was understood to have been cordial, Tokyo apparently decided that the earlier refusal of the Chinese Eastern to transport Japanese troops constituted a hostile act which justified seizure of the railway, and on January 30 it was reported that the South Manchuria Railway was taking over the southern branch of the Chinese Eastern. On February 1 M. Karakhan warned M. Hirota that the Soviet government might be compelled to protest against the entrance of Japanese troops into Harbin, the principal city on the Chinese Eastern. Despite this warning, the Japanese entered Harbin on February 5, thus completing the military occupation of Manchuria. This move was shortly followed by Japanese reports that Soviet troops were being concentrated in Siberia and that a war atmosphere reigned in Vladivostok.⁶⁰

On February 27, following the refusal of Soviet officials of the Chinese Eastern to lend the railway's rolling stock for the transportation of Japanese troops to Imienpo, east of Harbin, M. Hirota requested Soviet permission for the use of the eastern branch of the railway. He assured the Soviet government that the Japanese would go to Imienpo solely to protect some 20,000 Japanese nationals residing in that region. M. Karakhan replied that the transportation of troops on the Chinese Eastern violated Article 7 of the Portsmouth treaty, reaffirmed by the Soviet-Japanese convention of 1925, by which both countries undertook to use Manchurian railways "exclusively for commercial and industrial purposes and in no wise for strategic purposes." In view of the special circumstances, however, the Soviet government agreed to permit the transportation of a limited number of Japanese troops from Harbin to Imienpo and, in case of extreme necessity, to Hailin, on condition

51. "Serioznoe Polozhenie v Manchurii" (A Serious Situation in Manchuria), *Izvestia*, November 22, 1931.

52. *New York Times*, January 17, 1932.

53. *Christian Science Monitor*, January 16, 1932.

54. Cf. a statement by M. Matsudaira, Japanese Ambassador to London and head of the Japanese delegation to the Disarmament Conference in Geneva, *Journal de Genève*, May 27, 1932; *Izvestia*, May 31, 1932.

55. *Christian Science Monitor*, January 16, 1932.

56. *New York Times*, January 13, 1932.

57. *Izvestia*, January 24, 1932; *New York Herald Tribune*, January 25, 1932.

58. *New York Herald Tribune*, January 28 and 29, 1932.

59. *New York Times*, January 30, 1932. The Chinese officials of the railway agreed to this proposal, and the Soviet manager went to Changchun on January 30 to arrange for the transportation of Japanese troops. *Ibid.*, February 1, 1932.

60. *New York Herald Tribune*, February 8, 1932.

that Soviet rights and interests in the Chinese Eastern would not be infringed by the Japanese authorities. In conclusion, M. Karakhan requested information regarding White Russian activities in Manchuria and the reported massing of Japanese troops on the Soviet-Korean border, which appeared to infringe Article 2 of the Portsmouth treaty, obligating both countries to abstain from any military measures which might threaten the security of Russian or Korean territory.⁶¹ In reply, the Tokyo Foreign Office stated on March 2 that reports of Japanese assistance to White Russians were "entirely untrue," and that since the Soviet Union was massing troops along its borders, Japan, under the Portsmouth treaty, was free to do likewise.

The Soviet Union's position with respect to the Chinese Eastern was further complicated on March 1 with the establishment of the state of Manchoukuo under Japanese auspices. The Soviet government declined to recognize the new state, but acquiesced in the dismissal of Mo Teh-hui, Chinese president of the Chinese Eastern, who was replaced by Li Sho-keng, a Manchoukuo appointee.⁶²

The seriousness of the situation was recognized by an editorial published in *Izvestia* on March 4 and reprinted in all Moscow newspapers. Developments in Manchuria, said *Izvestia*, made it apparent that the Soviet government must be prepared to resist Japanese attack. As evidence of Japan's intentions in the Far East, the editorial adduced documents "proceeding from representatives of high military circles in Japan," one of which looked to the conquest of Eastern Siberia, while another named Lake Baikal as the goal of Japanese military operations.

"The peaceful policy of the U. S. S. R.," *Izvestia* declared, "is not a policy of ignoring facts. The Soviet government has pursued, is pursuing and will continue to pursue a policy of peace and non-interference in the events taking place in China. But this by no means signifies that the Soviet Union will permit anyone to violate the security of Soviet frontiers, to invade Soviet territory or to seize even the smallest portion of Soviet land."⁶³

Moscow's growing determination to probe Japan's Manchurian policy was indicated on March 17, when M. Karakhan informed M. Hirota that Tokyo's reply of March 2 was unacceptable and demanded further explanations regarding the status of "independent" Manchuria. The Japanese Ambassador pointed out that Tokyo had never inquired into the status of Outer Mongolia, to which M. Karakhan replied that the two cases were

not comparable, since the Soviet Union maintained no troops in Outer Mongolia. M. Hirota retorted that Japan had no means of verifying the truth of this assertion.⁶⁴ Two days later, however, he assured M. Karakhan that the principles of the open door and equality of opportunity would be maintained in Manchuria, and that Tokyo had not increased its troops on the Soviet-Korean border since the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1925. He inquired, in turn, regarding the reported concentration of Soviet troops and the construction of an airdrome on the Soviet-Korean border—reports which M. Karakhan declared to be entirely unfounded.⁶⁵

Despite this denial, rumors of Soviet military activities grew daily more frequent. Early in April Japanese reports estimated that Soviet forces in Eastern Siberia had increased from 60,000 to 150,000, and would be re-enforced by 150,000 more by May 1.⁶⁶ Soviet-Japanese tension reached an acute stage on April 12 with the wrecking of a Japanese troop train on the Chinese Eastern, six miles east of Harbin, when 14 soldiers were killed and 70 injured. This wreck, as well as an earlier plot to blow up a railway bridge on the Sungari River, were ascribed by the Japanese to "Communist bandits" acting under instructions from Moscow.⁶⁷ The situation was aggravated by fresh reports that General Ma was a Soviet agent, had taken up headquarters at Blagoveschensk, on Soviet territory, and was sending manifestoes to the Chinese people.

In the most vigorous editorial which had yet appeared in the Soviet press, *Izvestia* on April 15 denounced "new provocations in Manchuria" which, it claimed, had been staged by White Russians with the connivance of the Japanese authorities to justify the extension of Japanese occupation. It denied that General Ma was a Soviet agent or had ever been at Blagoveschensk, and warned that the Soviet Union would "expose these manoeuvres."⁶⁸ Three days later, after the Harbin police had invaded the headquarters of the Chinese Eastern and ransacked the office of M. Kuznetsov, *Izvestia* squarely placed "responsibility for the future course of events" on the Japanese military.⁶⁹

Tokyo's official view of the situation was indicated on April 18, when a Foreign Office spokesman stated that reports from the

64. *New York Herald Tribune*, March 18, 1932.

65. "K Sovetsko-Japonskim Otnosheniyam" (Regarding Soviet-Japanese Relations), *Izvestia*, March 22, 1932.

66. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 9, 1932.

67. Cf. "First Report on the Plots to Disturb Manchuria," prepared by the Intelligence Office of the Manchoukuo government, *The Manchuria Daily News*, Monthly Supplement, June 1, 1932, p. 13 et seq.

68. "Novaya Polossa Provokatsii v Manchurii" (A New Series of Provocations in Manchuria), *Izvestia*, April 15, 1932.

69. "Zep Provokatsii i Obmana" (A Chain of Provocations and Deceptions), *ibid.*, April 18, 1932.

61. Official Soviet communiqué, *Izvestia*, February 29, 1932.

62. *New York Times*, March 4, 1932.

63. *Izvestia*, March 4, 1932; *The Soviet Union Review*, April 1932, p. 91.

Japanese Consulate-General in Harbin showed that the wreck of the Japanese troop train was "the work of Russian Communists," although positive proof was still lacking. "Now that the Russians have completed their troop concentration in eastern Siberia," he added, "we must expect such provocative incidents," but declared that Japan had no intention of attacking the Soviet Union.⁷⁰ Tokyo argued, however, that the authority of Manchoukuo should be extended to all parts of Manchuria, including the Soviet sphere and the Chinese Eastern.⁷¹

The anti-Soviet agitation which followed the wreck of the Japanese troop train resulted in the arrest of a number of Soviet citizens accused of engaging in Communist propaganda,⁷² and caused considerable losses to Soviet trade in Manchuria. An exodus of Soviet residents began in mid-April, and it was reported that the Soviet government had instructed its trade organizations in Manchuria to wind up their affairs by May 1.^{72a} On April 25 the Harbin prosecutor announced that he had completed preparations for the trial of 50 Soviet citizens, former employees of the Chinese Eastern, who had been arrested in connection with the Japanese train wreck. He alleged that a "Red" terrorist organization, composed of 300 active members, had founded a society for the defense of Soviet interests which, in turn, was recruiting 3,000 members pledged to sabotage the efforts of the Manchoukuo government to consolidate its authority.⁷³ The full implications of this statement were made clear by General Araki, Japanese War Minister, who declared on April 29 that, if reports of Communist activities in North Manchuria were correct, Japan would have to cooperate with the Manchoukuo authorities in clearing this region of "radical elements threatening to undermine Japanese rights and interests in Manchuria." He denied, however, that such a development would lead to serious complications, "since Russia has recently shown a desire to maintain friendly relations with Japan."⁷⁴

The Soviet answer to General Araki's statement was contained in the May Day speech of General Bluecher, commander of the Far Eastern army, who declared that "the flames of real war" were beginning to flicker near the Soviet border and that the Red Army would "prevent any alien foot

from trampling on the soil of the collective farms"; the Soviet Union, however, desired, not war, but an opportunity to build its economic system.⁷⁵ By mid-May it was reported that the Soviet Union was working with "feverish activity" to condition the Trans-Siberian Railway for the transportation of re-enforcements to the Manchurian border. According to American sources, nearly 100,000 Soviet troops had been massed in Siberia, as compared with 40,000 in the autumn of 1931 when troop movements began, and the Soviet government was planning to concentrate a total of 250,000 men in that region.⁷⁶

The concentration of Soviet troops, far from precipitating a border clash, apparently served to clear the atmosphere. Soviet-Japanese tension had already been somewhat relieved on May 4, when the two countries decided to prolong for one year the agreement regarding payments for fishery leases concluded in 1931.⁷⁷ The continuation of this agreement represented a distinct advantage for the Japanese, as the yen had meanwhile materially depreciated.

Whether mollified by the renewal of the fisheries agreement or sobered by Soviet military activities, the Japanese press adopted a more moderate tone toward the Soviet Union. The *Japan Times* declared that "if the time is not yet ripe for the conclusion of the non-aggression pact proposed by the Soviet Union, still Japan must do everything to establish complete understanding" with the Soviet government, while Tokichi Tanaka, former Japanese Ambassador to Moscow, recommended the acceptance of the Soviet proposal, provided the Soviet Union first concluded a non-aggression pact with Manchoukuo and expressed willingness to discuss the situation in Outer Mongolia.⁷⁸ *Izvestia* welcomed these "new symptoms," but pointed out that the Japanese "took little account of the economic interests of the U. S. S. R. in the Chinese Eastern" and that Japan "had not yet had the leisure" to answer the Soviet proposal for a non-aggression pact.⁷⁹ While noting various Japanese attempts at a *rapprochement*, the Soviet Union remained on guard against the "hothead" military elements in Japan.⁸⁰

In a statement designed to reassure the Soviet government, Admiral Makoto Saito, who had succeeded Ki Inukai as Premier, declared on June 2 that the Soviet attitude regarding affairs in Manchuria had been "perfectly correct," and that he only wished the

70. *New York Times*, April 18, 1932.

71. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 19, 1932. The Soviet Union had acknowledged the authority of Manchoukuo to the extent of requesting it to recall the Chinese consul at Blagoveshchensk, on the ground that he had made improper use of the diplomatic code to send manifestoes signed by General Ma. *Ibid.*

72. On April 28 the Soviet Consul-General in Harbin protested to the Harbin police authorities regarding the maltreatment of imprisoned Soviet citizens. (*Izvestia*, May 6, 1932.)

72a. *New York Times*, April 19, 1932; *ibid.*, May 22, 1932.

73. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 25, 1932.

74. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1932.

75. *New York Times*, May 5, 1932; cf. also "Demonstrazlia Pobed" (The Demonstration of Victories), *Izvestia*, May 4, 1932.

76. *New York Times*, May 14, 1932.

77. Cf. p. 138.

78. Tanaka, "Soviet-Japanese Relations," cited.

79. "Eshe Raz o Iaponii i S. S. S. R." (Once More about Japan and the U. S. S. R.), *Izvestia*, May 15, 1932.

80. "Budem Bditelny." (Let us be Watchful), *ibid.*, May 30, 1932.

Soviet Union might have sufficient confidence in Japan's sincerity to discontinue all troop concentration in the Far East. With respect to the proposed non-aggression pact, he reiterated the view that such an agreement would weaken the Kellogg pact and would "cast a shadow" on Japan's relations with other states. Finally, he contended that it was undesirable for Japan to "acquire any interests possessed by others in the Chinese Eastern."⁸¹

While the critical stage of Soviet-Japanese relations appears to have passed, the outcome of the situation created by Japan's advance into North Manchuria remains uncertain. Since Manchoukuo has made no attempt to repudiate the Mukden agreement of 1924 concluded by the Manchurian government of Chang Hsueh-liang, the Chinese Eastern Railway legally continues under Russo-Chinese management. Traffic over the railway, however, has been disorganized by Japanese military operations, and Manchoukuo which, according to many observers, is merely a puppet of Japan, now controls the line from Changchun to Hailin, one hundred and twenty-five miles from the Soviet border. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union, which has frequently expressed willingness to cede the Chinese Eastern to a national Chinese government capable of holding the railway without foreign interference,⁸² has shown no intention to recognize Manchoukuo or to negotiate with it regarding the railway. Nor has it offered to support the Nanking government, which is openly anti-Communist, against Japan, despite the fact that Nanking has recently sought to renew diplomatic relations with Moscow.

With the Soviet Union in a position of more or less passive watchfulness, the fate of the Chinese Eastern appears to hinge on Japan's future policy in North Manchuria. It was reported late in May that the Franco-Asiatic bank in Paris had offered to sell Japan the claim to ownership of the railway which it asserts as successor to the Russo-Asiatic bank. This report was denied both by the Japanese government and the French Ambassador in Tokyo.⁸³ Even should the claim of the Franco-Asiatic bank be recognized as valid by French law, it would be of doubtful value to Japan. By the Peking agreement of 1924 the Soviet government became responsible for all claims of shareholders, bondholders and creditors of the railway incurred before 1917, and Japan

would have difficulty in successfully pressing a claim of this sort against the Soviet Union.

Three less problematic methods of terminating Soviet half-ownership of the Chinese Eastern may receive consideration in Japan. The Manchoukuo authorities might first attempt to redeem the railway under the Mukden agreement. This agreement, however, specifies that redemption must be made with Chinese capital, and the Soviet government might object that Manchoukuo could not secure the purchase price of the railway without Japan's financial assistance. Should this method appear too slow and uncertain, Japan might carry out its project of building the Tunhua-Huining extension, which would connect the South Manchuria Railway with a Korean line already in operation, and would parallel the Chinese Eastern in that region, thus probably diverting traffic from Vladivostok to the Korean port of Seishin.⁸⁴ Finally, Japan might simply continue to advance along the Chinese Eastern to the Soviet border, on the assumption that the Soviet Union will limit itself to diplomatic protests.

The presence of Japanese troops on the Soviet border, however, would create an entirely different situation. While the Soviet Union, absorbed by the task of economic construction, has no desire at present to contend with Japan for control of the Chinese Eastern or a share of influence in North Manchuria, it would doubtless vigorously resist any Japanese encroachments on its territory. The results of a conflict between the two countries are unpredictable. The military strength of the Red army is as yet an unknown quantity, and the transportation of war material and supplies to Siberia would prove difficult, despite the fact that the Trans-Siberian Railway is now double-tracked from the Urals to Karimskaya, near the Manchurian border. The reputation of the Japanese army, however, has been somewhat dimmed by the Shanghai affair, and while Japan would be close to its base of supply, it might be faced with far more serious economic and political unrest than the Soviet Union. The attitude of other powers, moreover, might prove a decisive factor. The United States, which has refused to recognize the Manchoukuo régime, might then be faced with a clear-cut issue—recognition of the Soviet Union, which would weaken Japan's position, or neutrality, which both Moscow and Tokyo would interpret as support of the Japanese cause.

81. *New York Times*, June 3, 1932. The Chinese personnel of the railway had meanwhile been changed by Manchoukuo authorities, and it had been suggested that the Chinese Eastern be renamed the "North Manchuria Railway," and that its Russian broad-gauge tracks be altered to standard American-gauge tracks, similar to those of the South Manchuria Railway.

82. Louis Fischer, "Russia and Japan in Manchuria," *Manchines and Men in Russia* (New York, Harrison Smith, 1932), p. 58, 77.

83. *New York Times*, May 26, 1932.

84. *Ibid.*, May 13, 1932. Japan is planning the construction of three other lines which would parallel the Chinese Eastern: a line of 163 miles from Yenki on the Korean border to Hailin on the Chinese Eastern; a branch from Kirin northward to Wuchang, which would parallel the Chinese Eastern branch line running southward from Harbin to Changchun; and a line of 132 miles from Changchun to Talai on the Nonni River. A fifth line, 123 miles long, would run northwestward from Taonan to Solun, near the border of Inner Mongolia.